AVATAR

The Last Airbender

Show #302

BOOK THREE: FIRE
CHAPTER TWO: "The Headband"

Written by:

John O'Bryan

As Broadcast Draft
April 4th, 2007

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. FIRE NATION PALACE - ZUKO'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Prince Zuko tosses in his bed, unable to sleep. He finally stands up and throws on a hooded robe. He's got something on his mind as he leaves the palace.

EXT. FIRE NATION CAPITAL - MOMENTS LATER

Zuko slinks down a city street with his face concealed. He glances up at a street sign to see where he is.

EXT. STONE TOWER - MOMENTS LATER

Zuko finally stops in front of a fortified prison tower. He stares up at the prison, contemplative. A guard's face shouts down from a tower window.

TOWER GUARD
Who's there?

Zuko briskly disappears into the darkness before the tower guard can identify him.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SKY - DAYBREAK

A giant, fluffy cloud drifts across the sky. Suddenly, Aang's voice can be heard inside the cloud.

AANG (O.S.)
I think I see a cave below...

SOKKA (O.S.)
Shh! Keep quiet!

EXT. FIRE NATION WILDERNESS - MOMENTS LATER

As the cloud descends to the ground, it is suddenly blown away by an Airbending blast, revealing it was actually Aang and friends riding on Appa.

SOKKA
Great job with the cloud camo. But next time, let's disguise ourselves as the kind of cloud who knows how to keep its mouth shut.

TOPH
Yeah, we wouldn't want a bird to hear us chatting up there and turn us in.

SOKKA
Hey -- we're in enemy territory... those are enemy birds.

Sokka casts a squinty-eyed DIRTY LOOK at a cute bird in its nest.

TINY BIRD
(CUTE TWITTERING)

Aang and Katara giggle at Sokka's seriousness, as they follow him into the cave.

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

The kids enter and have a look at their new campsite.

SOKKA
Well, this is it. This is how we'll be living until the invasion begins -- hiding in cave after cave after cave...

KATARA
Sokka, we don't need to become cave people. What we need is some new clothes.

AANG
Yeah. Blending in is better than hiding out. If we get Fire Nation disguises, we'll be just as safe as we would be hiding in a cave.

TOPH
Plus, they have real food out there. Does anyone want to sit in the dirt and eat cave-hoppers?

PAN TO a cave-hopper who CHIRPS. Momo jumps in the air, flapping his arms with excitement at the sight of the bug.

MOMO
(CHITTERS EAGERLY)

SOKKA
(to Momo)
Looks like we got outvoted, sport.
Let's get some new clothes.

EXT. FANCY FIRE NATION HOME - DAY

The kids' heads pop up from behind a shrub. They fix their sights on a clothesline draped with an array of the finest Fire Nation fashions.

AANG
I don't know about this. These clothes belong to somebody.

KATARA
I call the silk robe!

She grabs a silk robe off the clothesline.

AANG
But if it's essential to our survival... then I call the suit!

He rushes to grab a pair of pants and a matching top. He takes the sash off the shirt and ties it around his forehead, concealing his tattoo.

AANG
(pointing to his head)
Ta-da! Normal kid.

Toph picks up and contemplates a pair of shoes.

TOPH
Hmm. I should probably wear shoes... but then I won't be able to see as well. Sorry, shoes.

She RIPS the soles off the shoes. She tries them on, with her bare feet touching the ground beneath.

TOPH
Finally -- a stylish shoe for the blind Earthbender.

KATARA
How do I look?

Aang looks at Katara in her new Fire Nation getup, in a twinkly-love-shot like the one we saw in episode 1.14 -- but the shot stops when he gets to her necklace.

AANG
Uh... your mom's necklace.

Katara touches it, realizing.

KATARA
Oh. Yeah, I guess it's pretty obviously Water Tribe, isn't it?

She removes it slowly -- it's obviously painful for her.

EXT. FIRE NATION BAZAAR - LATER

At the bazaar, the kids have just finished purchasing a few Fire Nation trinkets to complete their outfits. (E.g., a new necklace for Katara, topknot ring for Sokka, etc.) Now the kids peruse the food selection.

AANG
I used to visit my friend Kuzon here a hundred years ago. So everyone just follow my lead and stay cool, or as they say in the Fire Nation, "stay flamin'."

A HUNGRY CITIZEN walks by with some barbecued meat on a stick. Aang looks at Sokka as if to say, "watch this."

AANG
Greetings, my good hotman (PRON: HOT-mun).

HUNGRY CITIZEN
(confused)
Uh, hi, I guess...

The man looks at them funny and keeps walking.

Toph, Katara, and Sokka start to walk into a restaurant with various slabs of meat in the window.

AANG
Oh. We're going to a meat place.

SOKKA
Come on, Aang. <u>Everyone</u> here eats meat. Even the meat.

He points to a fat, juicy hippo-cow, which is happily gnawing on a drumstick.

AANG
You guys go ahead. I'll just get some lettuce out of the garbage.

He waits outside alone with Momo. He greets another Fire Nation citizen walking by with lunch.

AANG
(nodding)
Hotman.

The man looks at Aang like he's crazy, and keeps walking. Aang notices that he's not blending in at all. Everyone is staring at him, including three Fire Nation soldiers. They begin toward him. Momo quickly ducks inside Aang's shirt. (He peeks out occasionally during the following exchange.) The Fire Nation Soldiers surround Aang -- he's BUSTED.

FIRE NATION SOLDIER
It's over. We caught you.

AANG
Who, me?

FIRE NATION SOLDIER
It couldn't be more obvious that you don't belong here.

Aang swallows a lump in his throat. He's bewildered and terrified as the soldiers grab him.

FIRE NATION SOLDIER
Next time you play hooky, you might want to take off your school uniform.

INT. FIRE NATION SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER

The two soldiers deliver Aang to the classroom of MS. KWAN, a petite, elderly woman with a fierce passion for grammar. The class is full of kids Aang's age.

MS. KWAN
Oh, is this a new mind ready for molding?

Aang looks back at the two soldiers, who nod at him firmly.

AANG
That's right.
(knocking on his head)
Let the molding begin.

This puts the soldiers at ease and they begin to leave. Then Ms. Kwan scrutinizes Aang.

MS. KWAN
Wait a minute. (GASPS) You're not from the Fire Nation!

Aang tenses up for a beat. It again appears he is busted -- the soldiers are poised again.

MS. KWAN
Clearly you're from the colonies.

AANG
(going with it)
Yyyeah, the colonies, of course! The Fire Nation colonies in the Earth Kingdom.

The soldiers nod and leave now.

MS. KWAN
(suddenly stern)
Your etiquette is terrible. In the homeland, we bow to our elders. Like so...

She demonstrates the bow. Aang attempts to copy it.

AANG
Sorry, ma'am.

MS. KWAN
And we don't wear head coverings indoors.

Aang feels his headband. If he removes it, he's busted.

AANG
Um... I have a scar. It's really embarrassing.

MS. KWAN
Very well. What is your name? Or should we just call you "mannerless colony slob?"

AANG
(CHUCKLES) Just 'slob' is fine. Or, uh... Kuzon.

EXT. SCHOOLYARD - AFTERNOON

On the outside, the school is protected by military policemen. A muscular M.P. swings a heavy mallot and rings a big iron bell. Kids begin streaming out of the school. Aang exits the building and speaks privately with Momo, who is still hiding in his shirt.

AANG
We made it through the day, Momo.
(realizing)
And it was pretty fun.

Aang is greeted by a cute girl from his class, ON JI.

ON JI
Don't let the headmaster catch you with that monkey.

Momo again ducks back inside the shirt. Aang tries in vain to cover the lump in his chest.

AANG
What monkey?

ON JI
Don't worry, I'm not a tattle-tale. My name's On Ji. I like your headband, by the way.

Aang smiles. It looks like he's finally making a friend. Suddenly, a thick, jockish kid -- HIDÉ -- enters and locks arms with On Ji.

HIDÉ
On Ji, you don't have to babysit the new kid.

Aang quickly bows to Hidé in the manner taught by Ms. Kwan.

AANG
(genuinely impressed)
Wow. You must be one of those popular kids I've been hearing about.

HIDÉ
That's right. Now listen, friend. I know you're from the colonies, so I'll say this slowly: On Ji is my girlfriend. Don't forget it.

Disarmed by Aang's innocent look, Hidé exits.

AANG
(sincere)
It was nice meeting you.

A group of smaller kids look on. One of them, SHOJI, compliments Aang.

SHOJI
I don't believe it. He didn't beat you up, not even a little.

AANG
Guess I'm just lucky.

SHOJI
We were on our way to play 'Hide and Explode'. You wanna come?

AANG
(smiling big)
I'd love to.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Aang comes home, lightly charred and battered by a game of "Hide and Explode". But he looks like he's had a great time.

KATARA
Where have you been? We've been worried sick.

AANG
I got invited to play with some kids after school.

SOKKA
After what?!

AANG
I enrolled in a Fire Nation school...
(thoughtful beat)
And I'm going back tomorrow.

The kids look at Aang like he's lost his mind. Sokka is still a step behind in the conversation.

SOKKA
Enrolled in what?!

EXT. STONE TOWER - THAT MOMENT

Zuko has returned to the prison tower in his hooded robe.

TOWER GUARD
You again?! Stop where you are!
(recognizing him)
Prince Zuko?

Zuko walks straight to the guard, thrusts his forearm into the guy's chin, and pins him to the wall.

ZUKO
I'm going in for a visit, you're going to stand guard here, and no one is going to know about this.

He walks past the guard, who remains pinned to the wall, petrified.

INT. STONE TOWER - SECONDS LATER

Zuko climbs the spiral staircase to the tower cell. He opens the door to find Uncle Iroh looking lonely in his cell. It's obvious that Zuko misses Uncle a little in spite of himself.

ZUKO
Uncle... It's me.

Uncle literally turns his back on his nephew.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

The gang is still absorbing what Aang has told them. Sokka has now calmed down considerably.

SOKKA
Aang -- I'm trying to be mature and not immediately shoot down your idea. But it sounds really terrible.

TOPH
Yeah, we got our outfits. What do you need to go to school for?

AANG
Every minute I'm in that classroom, I'm learning new things about the Fire Nation. I already have a picture of Fire Lord Ozai.

He shows them a textbook picture of Fire Lord Ozai.

AANG
And here's one that I made out of noodles...

He holds up a crappy version of the picture that he made out of dried noodles.

SOKKA
Impressive, I admit. But I still think it's too dangerous.

AANG
(lying)
I guess we'll never find out about the secret river then... It goes right to the Fire Lord's palace. We were supposed to learn about it in class tomorrow...

SOKKA
(deep in thought)
Hmm. I am a fan of secret rivers... Fine, let's stay a few more days.

Aang jumps excitedly.

AANG
Flamey-O, hotman!

He picks up his books and walks to the back of the cave. Sokka looks at Toph and Katara.

SOKKA
Flamey-O?

They both shrug, unable to explain Aang's bizarre word usage.

INT. STONE TOWER - THAT MOMENT

Zuko is still trying to talk to Uncle, who still ignores him.

ZUKO
You brought this on yourself, you know. We could have returned together. You could have been a hero.

Uncle actually manages to turn farther away from Zuko, who is visibly stung by the snub.

ZUKO
You have no right to judge me, Uncle. I did what I had to do in Ba Sing Se, and you're a fool for not joining me.

Uncle says nothing and continues staring at the wall.

ZUKO
You're not going to say anything?

Uncle still doesn't react. Zuko's frustration turns to rage -- he takes it out on a nearby guard's chair, BURNING it to ashes.

ZUKO
You're a crazy old man! You're crazy, and if you weren't in jail, you'd be sleeping in a gutter!

Zuko turns and exits the tower, leaving Iroh alone in his cell. Unseen by Zuko, a TEAR drops from his uncle's eye.

INT. MS. KWAN'S CLASSROOM - THE NEXT DAY

Aang and his classmates are standing at their desks with their right hands raised.

MS. KWAN
Good morning, class. Recite the Fire Nation Oath...

CLASS
My life, I give to my country. With my hands, I fight for Fire Lord Ozai, and our forefathers before him. With my mind, I seek ways to better my country...

During the oath, Aang is trying his best to fake the words.

AANG
Firebenders, Fire Lord... wa-bah-bah...

A few of his classmates hear him and start giggling. They think Aang is just being cool and subversive. Ms. Kwan silences them with a mean stink-eye.

CLASS
...And with my feet, may the March of Civilization continue.

The students take their seats.

MS. KWAN
Since it's obviously hilarious to mock our national oath, we'll begin with a pop quiz on our great March of Civilization.

The students GROAN as they take out their brushes and parchment.

MS. KWAN
Question one: What year did Fire Lord Sozin battle the Air Nation army?

Aang looks perplexed. He raises his hand.

MS. KWAN
Kuzon?

AANG
Is that a trick question? The Air Nomads didn't have a formal military. Sozin defeated them by ambush.

The class TITTERS with delight. They can't believe someone is challenging a teacher.

MS. KWAN
(scoffing)
Well -- I don't know how you could possibly know more than our national history book... unless you were there a hundred years ago.

Aang decides it's best to shut his mouth.

AANG
I'll just write down my best guess.

INT. MUSIC CLASSROOM - LATER

Aang is now sitting in music class, playing along with the children's orchestra. He's blowing loud, HORRIBLE NOTES on a tsungi horn and shuffling his feet with the rhythm. The MUSIC TEACHER -- a fat, Fire Nation version of Richard Dreyfuss -- stops conducting and glares at him.

MUSIC TEACHER
Kuzon?

Aang abruptly stops playing, causing his note to flatten even more.

AANG
I know -- I'm a terrible tsungi hornist.

MUSIC TEACHER
No, child. That hullaballoo going on with your feet -- is that a nervous disorder?

AANG
I was just dancing. You do dances here in the homeland. Right?

He looks around at his classmates, who shake their heads.

SHOJI
Not really, no.

MUSIC TEACHER
Dancing is not conducive to a proper learning environment. Young people must have rigid discipline and order.

AANG
But what about expressing yourself?

MUSIC TEACHER
I know sometimes we're so moved by our love for our nation that we can't control our own bodies. If you must, you may march in place quietly next time the urge hits you.

Aang tries quietly marching for a beat, then hangs his head and frowns.

EXT. SCHOOLYARD - AFTERNOON

The large, iron bell rings, and all of the students file out of the school. As Aang exits, he realizes that all of the students are now staring at him and whispering. On Ji approaches.

ON JI
Hi Kuzon. I really liked that crazy dance you were doing.

AANG
Thanks, On Ji. I could show it to you again if you'd like.

Before he can demonstrate the move, his books are suddenly incinerated right in his arms. He turns around to see an angry Hidé with fists clinched in a Firebending pose.

HIDÉ
What'd you say, colony trash? You're going to show her something?

AANG
Just some dance movements.

For some reason, this makes Hidé even angrier.

HIDÉ
Nobody shows my On Ji anything. Especially 'movements'.

Hidé tries to shove Aang -- but Aang moves aside with the grace of an Airbender, and Hidé's momentum sends him stumbling forward. Embarrassed, Hidé regains his footing and throws a punch at Aang, who again steps aside to avoid the blow. Hidé looks really mad now as he collects himself and throws several more blows. Aang dodges each of them with minimal effort. Exhausted, Hidé finally trips and lands flat on his face. The bully looks up from the mud pitifully just as the school HEADMASTER arrives to break up the fight. He grasps Aang by the back of his shirt.

HEADMASTER
Picking fights on your second day?

HEADMASTER
We need to have a conference to discuss your punishment. Bring your parents to my office after school.

AANG
(worried)
Parents? But--

HEADMASTER
Don't be late!

The Headmaster leaves. The look on Aang's face says "How do I handle this one?"

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL - HEADMASTER'S OFFICE - LATER

HEADMASTER
Thank you for coming, Mister and Missus... ?

Reveal that Sokka and Katara are sitting next to Aang, posing as his parents. Sokka is wearing a crazy moustache-connecting-with-sideburns, and Katara has fattened herself with pillows. They look at each other, scrambling to come up with a last name.

SOKKA
Fire. Wang Fire. This is my wife Sapphire.

Katara extends her hand...

KATARA
Sapphire Fire, nice to meet you.

The Headmaster doesn't shake her hand and she withdraws it.

HEADMASTER
Mr. and Mrs. Fire, your son has been enrolled here for two days, and he's already causing problems. He's argued with his history teacher, disrupted music class, and roughed up my star pupil.

KATARA
(in worried mother voice)
My goodness, that doesn't sound like our Kuzon.

HEADMASTER
That's what any mother would say, ma'am. Nonetheless -- you're forewarned. If he acts up one more time, I'll have him sent to "reform school". By which I mean the coal mines. Are we clear?

Aang looks a little alarmed. Sokka asserts himself with his most fatherly tone, twirling a piece of his facial hair.

SOKKA
Don't you worry, Mr. Headmaster. I'll straighten this boy out somethin' fierce.
(threatening Aang)
Young man -- as soon as we get home, you're going to get the punishment of a lifetime.

HEADMASTER
That's what I like to hear.

EXT. PALACE GROUNDS - SUNSET

Zuko and Mai are having a picnic, watching the sun set.

MAI
Orange is such an awful color.

ZUKO
(CHUCKLES) You're so beautiful when you hate the world.

MAI
I don't hate you...

ZUKO
I don't hate you too.

They lean in and KISS --

AZULA (O.S.)
(CLEARS THROAT)

They realize Azula has now joined them.

AZULA
Zuko, could I have a word with you?

ZUKO
Can't you see we're busy?

AZULA
(getting rid of Mai)
Oh Mai -- Ty Lee needs your help untangling her braid.

MAI
Sounds pretty serious.

Mai exits, leaving Azula alone with Zuko.

AZULA
So... I hear you've been to visit your Uncle Fatso in the prison tower?

Zuko looks pissed.

ZUKO
That guard told you!

AZULA
(smiling)
No. You did, just now.

ZUKO
(mistrustful)
Okay, you caught me -- what is it that you want, Azula?

AZULA
Actually... nothing. Believe it or not, I'm looking out for you. If people find out you've been to see Uncle, they'll think you're plotting with him. Just be careful, dum-dum.

Zuko nods -- on some level (deep down) he appreciates her concern.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

The kids are arriving home after the conference with the headmaster. Sokka is still speaking with paternal authority and still wearing his fake facial hair (and does so for the rest of the episode).

SOKKA
That settles it. No more school for you, young man.

AANG
I'm not ready to leave. I'm having fun for once -- just being a normal kid. You don't know what it's like, Sokka. You get to be normal all the time.

TOPH
Ha-ha.

Sokka looks irked.

AANG
Listen guys -- those kids at school are the future of the Fire Nation. If we want to change this place for the better, we need to show them a little taste of freedom.

SOKKA
What could you possibly do for a country of depraved little Firemonsters?

AANG
I'm going to throw them a secret dance party.

Once again, the other kids look at Aang like he's lost his mind. Sokka just simmers like an angry father.

SOKKA
Go to your room.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Toph is using her bending to fix up the cave for the party. She lifts a large chunk of rock out of the ground, creating a stage. She does a little more bending and creates tables and chairs from the sides of the cave. Sokka shakes his head in disbelief.

SOKKA
I can't believe we're having a dance party. It seems so... silly.

AANG
Don't think of it as a dance party, but as a cultural event celebrating the art of fancy footwork.

Across the cave, Katara finishes stirring a bowl of punch. She takes a sip and judges it...

She bends it into an ice sculpture of the Fire Nation emblem, which drips ice cold punch into the bowl. Momo playfully tries to drink the dripping punch. (Maybe he tries to lick the sculpture and gets his tongue stuck? Maybe not!) Just then, Toph shouts a warning from the cave entrance.

TOPH
They're coming! Everyone stop bending.

The kids see a number of kids walking toward their cave. Aang turns to Appa.

AANG
Sorry, buddy... you should probably wait out back.

APPA
(COMPLAINING MOAN)

AANG
I know, you've got fancier feet than anybody -- and six of 'em!

Appa sadly heads toward the rear exit of the cave. (Or if necessary he gets an Earthbending assist from Aang.)

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAVE - LATER

The school band has set up their instruments on the stage. Aang gets excited as the band begins a catchy, percussion-heavy number.

AANG
Ladies and gentlemen. The Flamey-Os. Yeah... this ought to get everybody moving.

He watches eagerly, but the kids don't seem to be responding. Instead, they all glance at each other with uncertainty.

SHOJI
Now what do we do?

AANG
This is when you start dancing!

TIMID KID
I don't think my parents want me dancing in a cave.

NERVOUS KID
Yeah, what if someone finds out?

Aang realizes it's going to take more than a hot beat to make these kids dance.

AANG
Oh, boy. Listen guys -- dancing isn't something you think about. It's a form of self-expression that no one can ever take away from you.

The students are still unsure.

SHOJI
Maybe it was different in the colonies, Kuzon. But we don't do that here.

AANG
Sure you do! You have for generations. It just so happens I know several classic Fire Nation dances.

The Fire Nation kids are now intrigued. As Aang begins to glide across the floor.

AANG
A hundred years ago, this was known as "the Phoenix flight"...

Aang prances across the cave with his arm arched over his head, somewhat resembling a swan. Aang returns across the floor backwards with his arms swinging in a low, graceful manner.

AANG
...And this was the "camelephant strut".

Lots of "ooh's" and "aah's" begin to emanate from the students.

TOPH
(astonished)
Who knew Twinkle Toes could dance!

EXT. PRISON TOWER - ESTABLISHING - THAT MOMENT

INT. PRISON TOWER - CONTINUOUS

Zuko has returned to Uncle's cell, hat in hand. This time, he attempts a gentler approach -- he pushes some food from his picnic basket through the bars as a peace offering.

ZUKO
I brought you some komodo-chicken. I know you don't care for it, but I figured it beats prison food.

Again, Uncle pays him no mind. Zuko finally begins to fall apart.

ZUKO
I admit it -- I have everything I always wanted, but it's not at all how I thought it would be.

He looks at Uncle hopefully, but again, Iroh doesn't bite.

ZUKO
The truth is, I need your advice... I think the Avatar is still alive. I know he's out there. I'm losing my mind...
(pleading)
Please Uncle, I'm so confused -- I need your help.

When Zuko sees that Uncle isn't going to respond to his pleas, he becomes furious.

ZUKO
Forget it. I'll solve this myself! Waste away in here for all I care...

Trying his best to look hard, Zuko turns and exits the prison for the last time.

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Aang continues to demonstrate his dances. He pulls On Ji from the crowd to help. (Note: they dance together without too much contact -- we need to save the juicier couples dancing moves for later!)

AANG
...And this is how they do it in the ballrooms of Ba Sing Se!

Aang and On Ji dance with each other, Aang demonstrating the moves and On Ji following along and imitating him and getting into it.

SOKKA
Wow, they look pretty good together...

KATARA
(feigning disinterest)
Eh, if that's what you like.

But Katara steals a glance... still trying to hide her jealousy. Now other kids are starting to get into it and tentatively dance -- Aang's demonstration is working!

AANG
Yeah! That's it -- that's the sound of happy feet!

Gradually, the entire student body begins to feel the funk and break out in dance -- some in couples, some in groups, and some by themselves.

AANG
All right, go with that. Everybody freestyle!

Aang begins doing a spectacular double-leg-loop dance, in which he actually leaps through his own arms.

He looks up right into the eyes of Katara, who is watching his moves with great interest. With Airbender's speed, Aang rushes to her and extends his hand to her.

KATARA
(nervous)
I don't know, Aang, these shoes aren't really right for dancing and I'm not sure that I know how to--

AANG
(super confident)
Take my hand.

KATARA
Okay.

He turns up his dancing a notch, and the two perform an awesome Avatar-style version of a combination tango/swing dance. Soon the other dancers have cleared an area for the dazzling couple as they watch them go.

KATARA
Aang -- everyone's watching.

AANG
Don't worry about them. It's just you and me right now.

Katara lets herself go, and gets into it. The two of them are on fire! Their impressive moves blow away the crowd, with spins and turns and flips and whirls.

CROWD
("OOHS" and "AAHS")

Katara and Aang culminate with an exciting final move, as Aang DIPS Katara, causing her to BLUSH in spite of herself.

CROWD
(CHEERS)

Then, the band starts an upbeat number and everyone starts dancing again.

EXT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Outside, the school headmaster is walking toward the cave with a few Fire Nation soldiers and Hidé. They pause and listen to the raucous sounds coming from within.

HEADMASTER
It <u>is</u> a dancing party. You did the right thing by telling me, Hidé.

HIDÉ
Any time, headmaster sir.

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Even Timid Kid is dancing now, with abandon!

TIMID KID
This is incredible! It's like my inhibitions just disappeared!

The headmaster and his soldiers come tearing into the cave.

TIMID KID
Okay, they're back again.

He immediately stops dancing and SLUMPS awkwardly. The headmaster spots Aang, who is now dancing with Momo.

HEADMASTER
He's the one we want. The boy with the headband!

The soldiers charge toward Aang. Shoji notices that Aang is in trouble.

AANG
Uh-oh.

Aang takes off running through the crowd of students. The soldiers give furious chase. Katara cringes as they knock over the punch fountain, finding no one inside. The headmaster sees what looks like Aang's head bouncing through the crowd. He signals to the soldiers. They chase the bobbing head, shoving their way through all of the students. As they approach the boy wearing a headband...

SOLDIER #1
Gotcha.

But the kid turns around, and it's Shoji, wearing his sash around his head just like Aang's HEADBAND.

SHOJI
Looking for me?

HEADMASTER
That's not the one. He's here somewhere! Don't let him leave the cave!

The soldiers scan the room and see another banded head. They run after it, shoving their way through more students, and find... On Ji, wearing her hair up with a HEADBAND.

ON JI
Yes?

The soldiers spot another head wearing a HEADBAND... then another. They check them both to discover the timid kid and the nervous kid, also with HEADBANDS like Aang.

NERVOUS KID/ TIMID KID
Hi there./ How we doing?

The headmaster sees yet another head that looks remarkably like Aang's. He spins the student around, but it's actually a dorky, TOOTHLESS KID who looks nothing like Aang.

TOOTHLESS KID
(lisping badly)
Searching for someone?

The authorities realize they are now in the middle of a sea of heads with HEADBANDS.

STUDENTS
Who are you looking for? / Do you need something? / Over here! / etc.

At that moment, everyone's eyes are on the headmaster in the back of the cave -- Aang and friends seize the opportunity to sneak out the same way Appa left earlier.

With the band still playing its hot dance number, the headmaster begins to realize he's been beaten. And to top it off, one of his soldiers is tapping his toes to the beat.

HEADMASTER
Stop that!

The soldier snaps to attention.

EXT. SKY - APPA'S BACK - MOMENTS LATER

As Appa flies into the night, the gang collects themselves. Sokka is still wearing his ridiculous facial hair.

KATARA
We're safe, Sokka. You can take off the moustache now.

SOKKA
Oh no I can't -- it's permanently glued to my skin.

Toph pats Aang on the back.

TOPH
Way to go, dancy-pants. I think you really did help those kids a little -- you taught them to be free.

Aang SHRUGS modestly.

AANG
I don't know... It was just a dance party, that's all.

KATARA
Well that was some dance party, Aang.

She kisses him on the cheek -- Aang BLUSHES.

SOKKA
(slow, proud clapping)
Flamey-O, sir, flamey-O.

EXT. PALACE GROUNDS - THAT MOMENT

Under cover of night, Prince Zuko is talking to someone who is concealed in shadow.

ZUKO
You're sure you weren't followed?

The mysterious figure nods.

ZUKO
I've heard about you. They say you're good at what you do, and even better at keeping secrets.

The figure nods again. Zuko takes a moment to double-check his surroundings.

ZUKO
The Avatar is alive. I want you to find him... and end him.

The figure steps out of the shadows, revealing a large, scary villain with prosthetic metal limbs and a “third eye” tattooed on his forehead. He nods to Zuko, as the eye on his forehead SPARKS with fiery energy.

FADE OUT.

END OF STORY